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Memory Bells

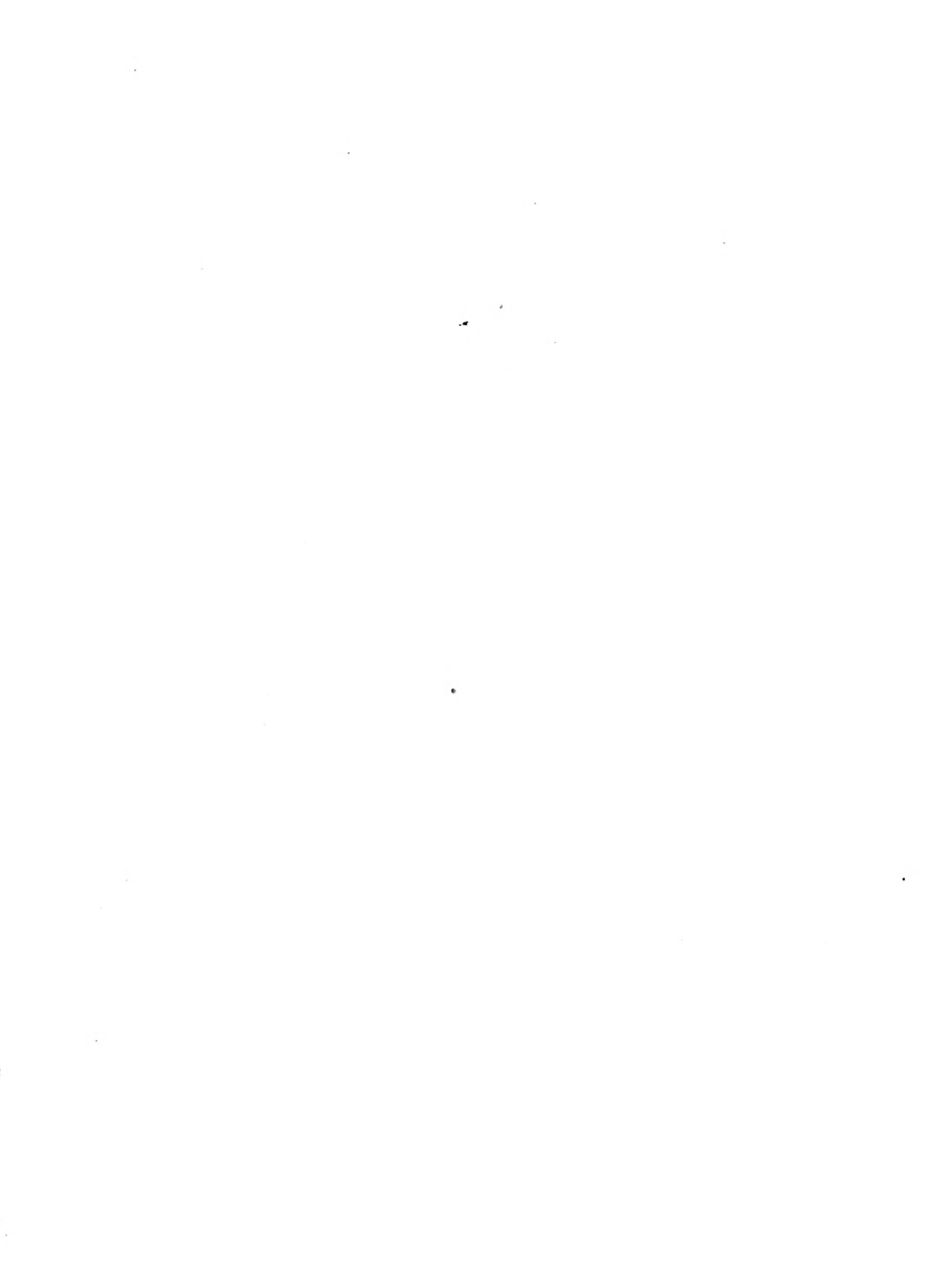
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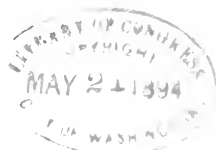
MEMORY BELLS

BY

ALICE PEASE BATES



BUFFALO
CHARLES WELLS MOULTON
1894



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DEDICATED
TO THE
MEMORY OF
MY BELOVED FATHER,
GENERAL PHINEAS PEASE.

MY FATHER'S BIBLE.

*IT lay upon the table,
Where he had placed it but an hour ago;
And I raised, with tender reverence
The book he valued so.
And all the little worries,
The trials and the strife
That press so close upon one
In a narrow sphere of life—
Seemed lifted, and a sense of sweet relief
Fell upon my troubled spirit,
Soothing all its care and grief.*

*Our lives are strangely mingled,
With joy and sorrow here,
Sometimes we get discouraged;
No light shines forth to cheer,
Our hope seems lost in darkness,
Our faith is very dim,
Till God's love and pity rescues
And we turn in trust to Him.*

MY FATHER'S BIBLE.

*My thoughts are wandering now
Back to my girlhood days;
To the daily family worship,
The hour of prayer and praise.
My father read from this same book
Sweet words of comfort given,
To those who love and trust and fear,
“ Our Father who art in Heaven.”*

*I could understand that trust,
The reverent love and fear,
From the noble, pure example
Of my earthly father here.
A life so full of wisdom,
A heart so full of love,
They seemed but a reflection
Of the great Heart above.
And this dear book has given
An hour of sweet release;
My heart is rested, strengthened,
Full of trust and love and peace.*

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MEMORY BELLS

MEMORY BELLS.

MEMORY bells—how sweet the chime,
When the soul looks back on the march of time!
Though their cadence has often a minor strain,
And wrings the heart with that throbbing pain,
That it felt when the wound was fresh with grief,
And even time scarce brought relief.

Memory bells—a far off chime
Of childhood's fragrant sunny clime,
Of free light-hearted flying years,
When lullabys soothed all our tears,
And every childish wish and hope
Looked bright in future's glowing scope.

Memory bells—like to a coil,
A peal of youth's ambitious toil,
They give us link by link the tale
Of plans in which we could not fail,
And dreams of future glory rent,
That caused no tear when dreams were spent.

Memory bells—now soft and sweet,
They chime a tale : the heart will beat
And answer each remembered strain,
And revel in love's sweet refrain;
The solemn vows we uttered then
Our hearts repeat in faith again.

Memory bells—while life shall last,
This chime most sacred in the past,
And e'en when death shall close our eyes,
Still sweet and clear its tones will rise,
Its upward flight will reach and thrill
The soul transformed, yet living still.

PANSIES.

“PLEASANT thoughts” I bring to you,
Of the past and present too;
And in future, you'll recall
Memories sweet of each and all
Who are now assembled here:
And as each succeeding year
Brings again the eventful day
In the happy month of May,

My withered leaves may then express
Something of the happiness,
Which your hearts will now confess.

A PRAYER.

O H, Christ, my heart was ever full of adoration
For Thy dear name and sacred purity!
Through Thee, from God, descends our inspiration,
His gracious gift to weak humanity.

My soul is often filled with discontent and longing,
When e'er I look within myself and see
The constant strife with sin, I fail to conquer,
Which bows my head with shame, O pity me!

I cry to Thee for help, dear Jesus,
I am so weak,—I can not stand alone,
I crave Thy aid, Thy loving kindness,
Thy mercy, which through ages past hath shone.

Help me to conquer self, my greatest struggle,
And then to lose myself for others' sake.
Give me patience, faith, and more endurance,
Make plain for me the path that I must take.

And be Thou ever near, my Saviour,
Else would I fall in sad despair,
Help me to fulfil my earth work rightly,
Nor murmur at the burdens I must bear.

OUR BABY.

DEAR little face so pure and fair,
Framed in silken shining hair,
Eyes of deepest violet hue,
Lips like a rosebud fresh with dew,
Dimpled hands so soft and sweet,
Two little snowy restless feet,
Form that a sculptor would love to trace:
Is it a wonder we call her Grace?

LOVE—PAST AND PRESENT.

YOU ask for a real love story,
And smilingly add—my own.
You may think sentimental reflection
I have through these years out-grown.

Perhaps you are right, for my life is
So full of its duties and cares,
I have scant time for sentiment surely,
Save when memory lures unawares.

But then, well hearts don't change, I fancy,
And to-night, as I search my own,
The old love has only grown deeper,
Like the glow of the red rose full-blown.

Just look at this locket, you know it,
His gift, and the face within
Is familiar to you, it is sacred,
For it speaks of the days that have been.

True lovers were we and God's sunshine
Seemed never so bright as then ;
And now all the past with its brightness
Comes back to my heart again.

What is it that gives us the warning,
That speaks to the waking soul ?
By what sign may we know of the coming,
The sweetness of love's control ?

It is a sudden hand pressure,
A glance of the eye, or a word
Whose accent betrays hidden meaning,
That only the heart could have heard ?

Ah, that voice, in its depth and its sweetness
Would move the heart of a stone!
Though the years have passed it still thrills me,
It has only the dearer grown.

Yes, the cares and the toil are as nothing
And my heart's greatest happiness
Is not in the thought of the lover,
But is found in the husband's caress.

NO NIGHT IN HEAVEN.

“**N**O night in heaven”—the words fall softly, sweetly,
I lift my head and look about, yet I see no one
nigh.

Surely some one spoke: again a voice said gently,

“There is no night in heaven, no tear, no sigh.

“There are no heart-breaks there, no vain repining
For treasures lost and sacrifices given,
You shall one day with joy behold your treasure
Shining with undimmed lustre in your home in heaven.

“No suffering there, no want or hunger,
No chilling winds to pierce the soul above,
There are no clouds, the soul stands radiant,
Crowned with the blessed sunshine of His love.

“No bitter words will wound or grieve the spirit,
The doubts and mist will all be cleared away.
No night in heaven, no need to rest there;
The soul rejoicing in eternal day.

“Look not on earth for joy or pure contentment,
The sharpest thorns surround the roses fair;
Their bloom will fade, the leaves will sadly wither,
Only above, you scent their fragrance rare.

“Heed not the pick and thrust upon the heart-strings,
You shall not walk your path alone.
Seek not for help or love in earthly friendship,
Lest they for bread should give to you a stone.

“Look up and live above your trials,
Let not the spirit's faith be riven !
Earth's night has nearly passed, the dawn is coming,
Eternal day—there is no night in heaven.”

The sweet voice ceased, the vision had departed,
My soul was filled with peace and love,
Content, once more, to bear each heavy burden,
Blest, by the angel from above.

THANKSGIVING POEM.

THANKSGIVING day has come again,
And its approach again revives
Sweet memories of departed years,
Saddened with thoughts of other lives.

Those lives so interwoven with our past,
Whose being long since ceased on earth;
Only their memory remains to us,
And thoughts of them soften our mirth.

We shut our eyes and scenes of long ago
Rise before us—a table filled with goodly cheer,
And laughing faces gather 'round,
And happy voices sounding in our ear.

Children were not banished from that board,
Their glee could not disturb the joyous feast;
For space of years is not counted there,
All are then young, in heart at least.

A pause—the merry voices cease,
A hush has fallen on the waiting crowd;
A reverent voice uplifts the soul's petition,
All eyes are lowered, each head bowed.

Thanks are returned for all the blessings
Showered upon them by God's loving grace;
An earnest prayer for His continued favor,
The glow of Heaven lights the speaker's face.

The feast that followed—how we love to dwell
Upon each happy hour of that time.
Before the strings upon the harp were broken,
And strains of minor mingled with the chime.

The tiny bud so early plucked from earth,
The ripened wheat is gathered Home at last;
Some gone to other homes of earth,
Some to a fairer clime have passed.

One by one the group of loving hearts
Was thinned, and scattered far and wide;
New homes with other hearts were linked,
New barks tossed on the drifting tide.

Yet as we gather 'round the table now,
We can but own, with hearts of thankfulness,
The blessings strewed along our backward path,
The Father's loving kindness we confess.

And when we join the loved ones by and by,
In that bright land beyond the skies,
Our hearts will in Thanksgiving still uplift,
And God's rare blessings recognize.

MUSIC.

OH wondrous art that can my soul enthrall,
And hold a willing captive to thy least caprice;
Thy lightest strain could never tire or pall,
In thee from care and grief I find a sweet release.

THE SPIRIT LIFE.

YOU ask me of the Spirit-life, my child,
Whether it be like this, so restless, wild,
And changing oft, from deepest joy to sorrow,
So full of peace to-day, of tears to-morrow,
To-day, no cloud of ill o'er-shadowing,
To-morrow, dreading what the setting sun may bring?

Or is it joy and love and peace,
With mind serene with perfect happiness,
No grief, no dread, no haunting fears,
No restless longings, idle tears,
A useful life that can not lack or fail,
The life you hoped to find beyond the vale?

Darling, if I could raise the mist before your eyes,
And show you all the gifts you most would prize,
A life complete with usefulness and duty,
The land in which we live, its light and beauty,
Our loved ones passed away from earth's dark shore
Around us now, and dearer than before,
If I could only show you this, my child,
Would it not still those longings wild?

Be patient, then, your work on earth must be
A test, to fit you for eternity:
And in your darkest trial, saddest hour,
In which you recognize God's hand and power,
Remember this, life can no sorrow hold
Which will not here be recompensed a thousand fold.

The heart will cease to ache, each tear be dried,
And all those earnest longings satisfied.
Then warm will be your welcome to our shore,

And loved ones clasp you to their hearts once more,
And dim will seem your earthly trials then,
Beyond expression of the tongue or pen.

REMINISCENCE.

IS it the sight of the violets
That wakens memories of the past?
I thought they were buried deep, so deep,
That even their dust was scattered at last.

Yet to-night, as I look at the rare, sweet flowers,
Pressed and lifeless though they be,
I know those memories are living still,
Though only their shadows remain with me.

Dear little token of faith and love,
You have lived your life, your bloom has fled;
Though short, 'twas sweet, and the lesson you teach
Will live long years, though you are dead.

INDIGNATION.

THERE was a Professor from town,
Whose great mind was seldom cast down,
Save when his wife's sister,
Forgot and wrote "Mister,"
Which enraged the Professor from town.

His wife's sister, not over bright,
Could not sign her own name aright;
She could not understand,
Though he wrote his command
In language more plain than polite.

But pride kept his righteous wrath down,
This learned Professor from town,
"This dame evermore
I will henceforth ignore,"
He said with a terrible frown.

ANNIVERSARY.

I AM thinking of this, dear father,
As your anniversary day;
Sweet memories will come to you
Of that time so far away.

It lies far back in the distance,
Yet visions sweet and pure,
Will bring to you a heart-ache
Which only Heaven can cure.

When you, in your strong, true manhood,
With your tender beautiful love,
Joined hands with my loving mother
Now gone to her home above.

When your solemn vows were uttered
On that golden wedding day,
Your peace of heart was perfect,
Her faith and love were your stay.

MEMORY BELLS.

True, your skies were often darkened;
Your hearts have been bowed with grief.
Losses came, which caused great depression,
From which there seemed no relief,

Yet you clung to each other the closer,
Your love was a *sacred* thing,
And your faith in God's infinite goodness
Was not lessened by suffering.

My heart goes out to you, father,
In your trials and loneliness,
I long to do something to help you,
To comfort, to cheer, and to bless.

But I only can love you and *love* you,
With a heart full of reverence,
For your wonderful patient endurance,
And pray for God's recompense.

GRACE.

THERE'S a dear little maiden with grave, sweet eyes
 Reflecting the blue of the summer skies ;
A wee, shy lassie, with winsome face,
And I love her, I love her, my darling Grace.

She was the first birdling that came to our nest;
I, perhaps, of all others, know her heart best.
And I know, in her loss, there could nothing replace
This sweet, priceless treasure, my darling Grace.

She is sensitive, loving, impulsive and true,
Though at times she might appear fickle to you;
Yet the language of heart I can easily trace,
And I love her, I love her, my darling Grace.

THE SMOKER.

HAPPY is the man who smokes,
 For when his pipe doth have full sway,
He banishes all vexing thoughts,
 And for the time whiffs care away.

EARTH'S ANGELS.

YOU speak of the beautiful angels, who dwell
In a land, of whose splendor no language can tell,
Of the loved ones who come to serve you and bless,
In your trials and sorrows, and loneliness.
Yet earth has her angels, as pure and divine
As those far above, who in higher realms shine.

'Tis true, we seldom recognize
These earth-bound angels, seldom prize
The ready sympathy, the feet that run
Errands of mercy, and the kindly service done.
Yet each deed of kindness, each action of love
Is remembered and blessed by the Father above.

These angels of earth, they are rare, I confess;
Yet she whom your heart does in gratitude bless,
Is one of God's chosen, a rare shining gem,
Fashioned near like the Star of Bethlehem.
She has blessed your home with her ministry sweet,
Has made your heart warm, and with sunshine replete.

Ye mortals why long for the angels above,
When those in your home have a claim on your love.

For the angels of earth have a spirit as fair,
As those gone before to the home over there;
And their glory awaits them, their reward will come,
When the Father at last shall summon them home.

MY FATHER'S PICTURE.

I STAND before your pictured face,
And wonder if you e'er will know
How dear these features are to me,
Or that I love you so.

There is a smile upon the lips,
A love-light in the eyes,
And something tells me, all my love
You feel and realize.

Is there a greater heart than thine?
A sympathy so true and sweet?
A never failing fount of love
On which I rest—a safe retreat.

'Tis growing on my soul each year,
This reverence and sacred love;
It helps me look beyond myself
Up to the Father's face above.

Oh blesséd heart, may I not linger here,
When thou hast passed from earth beyond.
'Twere sweeter far to welcome thee
Among the loved ones, true and fond.

Where parting never wrings the heart,
Nor tortures soul with sad adieus.
Where faith is always understood,
And Love her trust can ne'er refuse.

LULLABY.

THE evening shadows steal across the quiet room,
They touch me, pass me slowly by ;
As with my baby clasped within my arms,
I gently rock and sing a lullaby.

Sleep, my darling, sweetly rest to-night,
Hie thee to the slumber land to roam.
Angels guard thy happy spirit there,
Bring thee with the dawning safely home.

Pure thy soul, thy heart untouched by care ;
Sorrow can not haunt my darling's brow.
Would that thou couldst ever thus be free,
And thy future peace perfect as now.

Slowly now the snowy eyelids droop,
My baby gently nears the slumber land.
Sweeter, fairer, are its beauties rare,
Than we could know or ever understand.

CARNATION PINK.

OH pure and sweet carnation
With your petals snowy white,
Your dainty fragrance charms me,
Fills my heart with keen delight.
For your very purity,
Thrills my soul with ecstasy ;
And I greet you, lovely blossom,
For your bloom is dear to me.

THE MYSTERY OF DEATH.

OH wonderful favor of God !
Oh wonderful door of release !
When He stoops to sever the binding cord,
And give the spirit peace.

The cord of human life—
 So small and frail a link—
The end is nearer oft
 Than we would guess or think.

Do not sigh, when you look at the still white face,
 Which death hath set in his power,
Do not doubt the wisdom and mercy of God,
 For 'tis woman's happiest hour.

All the griefs of that quiet heart,
 Touched by death's mighty wand,
All the longings and fears of that soul
 Have passed to the great Beyond.

Ah, who can pierce the vail, and watch
 The spirit's flight from earth !
Ah, who can fathom the mystery
 That shrouds the second birth !

Has she met with rigid justice
 For wrong done to others here ?
Does she suffer and linger earth-bound,
 With a sight once dim, grown clear ?

For the pure, deep grief of the spirit
Has no equal in its share.
No other pang or sorrow
Is so terrible to bear.

Or, are her sins all pardoned,
And with loved ones true and blest,
Does she find that sweet communion
And the longed for heavenly rest?

Oh, Father in heaven have mercy!
Let justice be tempered with love!
And guide the wandering spirit
To a brighter realm above.

MEMORIALS.

SEARCHING in an old worn trunk one day
I came upon a dainty, curious thing,
A tiny cap, hand-worked, yellow with age,
A bit of paper pinned upon one string.

I raised the cap and read a name and date;
Beneath a baby's dress with stitches prime,
Alike hand-wrought and bearing on it too
The name, the date and yellow mark of time.

Ah, time worn relics of the past
To thee my heart will ever fondly cling !
Upon these fabrics fine, are chronicled
The record of my mother's christening.

TO CARRIE.

MOUNTING the stairs in eager haste,
Along the hall floor clear and sweet,
The music dear to my inmost heart
Is the patter of little feet.

A baby face looks in at the door.
"Is 'oo here mamma?" the sweet voice cries,
And she patters about in sweet content,
Her pure soul shining from her eyes.

My little sunshine, she calls herself,
And truly it is a fitting name,
For the little spirit so pure and bright,
Reflecting the heaven from which it came.

She follows me about the house,
Upstairs and down, with eager feet ;
And oft, her arms around my neck,
She lisps the question old and sweet.

“Is I 'oo sunshine, mamma, say ? ”

And when I clasp her to my heart,
All shadows seem to fly away,
With her bright soul they have no part.

Dear sunshine, may you live long years
To gladden my life with your pure white rays.
God keep your heart from blight and pain,
And help me give Him fitting praise.

PATIENCE.

BE patient, noble sufferer,
Your race is not yet run,
There is other work to do
Ere the setting of your sun.
'Tis but to cleanse and purify
These days of pain were sent,
To mould your spirit for the work,
God's willing instrument.

Be patient, noble sufferer,
As you lie upon your bed,
You little guess the radiance
The angels 'round you shed.

You can not know or realize
The help you daily give,
To weary, helpless mortals,
In their struggles, how to live.

Nay, do not be discouraged,
In your hours of suffering here,
Your angel nature ripens
For a higher, nobler sphere.
And one day, looking backward,
You will see and understand,
How these trials here will fit you
For *your home*—the better land.

GOOD-BY.

OF all the words that stir the heart
And brings from their depths a sigh,
Of all the words we dread the most,
Are these—"Good-by, good-by."

'Tis true, we say it oft with a smile
And a careless glance of the eye,
As we meet and greet upon our way,
And utter a gay good-by.

'Tis said each day to our child at the door,
 " Now, darling, be good, and try
To please your teacher, and hurry home,
 Good-by, my dear, good-by."

'Tis said with yearning to lover, friend,
 When the hours have seemed to fly ;
'Tis silently said o'er a new made grave,
 And the heart wails the bitter good-by.

My precious one, I can not say
 These words, while thou art nigh,
But soul reads soul, we feel and know
 The pain of the sad good-by.

But we must be brave, dear heart, some day
 We shall look on the years gone by,
With a smile, that these words have lost their sting,
 They will never be heard on high.

Good-by, God speed thee on thy way,
 And give thee health, I cry,
And hasten the day of thy return,
 Good-by, loved one, good-by.

SONG OF LOVE.

ELIZABETH, my darling one,
Thy charming brilliant loveliness
Is like the shining of the sun,
And power as great dost thou possess.

For thou couldst sway all hearts, I trow,
Indifferent though to all thou art,
Yet would I sing thy praise, and know
Thou hast forever won my heart.

MOONLIGHT.

THERE is glory in the sunlight;
Peace and rest beneath the starlight,
But these touch not hearts, nor charm sight,
Love charms only in the moonlight.

Holy thoughts come with the twilight,
'Twixt the sunset and the starlight;
Hallowed hour, yet there is less blight
In the radiance of the moonlight.

All the senses thrill with this sight,
Sweetly conscious of its great might,
'Though there's glory in the sunlight
Love supreme reigns in the moonlight.

THE KITCHEN FLOOR.

THERE are trials of various kinds
In this curious world of ours,
There are things to vex us at home and abroad,
For thorns always mingle with flowers.
But in the line of home duties, I know
There is nothing that tries me more,
Than to get down once a week on my knees
For scrubbing the kitchen floor.

In the first place, it always comes Saturday,
With everything else to do;
There are all kinds of cleaning, and mending of course
Accumulates all the week through.
And in all the hurry and bustle about,
I confess it does vex me sore,
To think I must get on my knees, not for prayer,
But to scrub that kitchen floor.

Oh servants, tried and worn!
Oh housekeepers, weary and sad!
If sympathy only could give you cheer,
I would surely make your hearts glad.

But this, as you say, will not help,
I can only beseech and implore,
That when we cross to the other side
There will be no kitchen floor.

HOUSEHOLD PETS.

FRANCES is our kitten, saucy little thing,
Never still a minute, always on the wing,
Such a little torment, and she has one foe
She delights to torture, for he hates her so.

You will hardly credit, you will laugh at that,
When I tell you that her foe is just a large, black cat.
But he never feels quite safe from her pranks, and then
Would not condescend to play, he, our stately Ben.

Ben is handsome, glossy, black, white tipped paws and
nose,
And he wears a snowy bib, you may well suppose,
He is far too grand to play with a silly kitten,
Think I'll say no more, he might object to what I've written.

ON THE TRAIN.

THROUGH frosty fields the train speeds on,
Past dark bare trees, tall poles, and crooked bars,
The ever shifting scene we gaze upon,
Lulls care to rest, while riding in the cars.

A deeply wooded space, then icy pools;
Beyond, a widely sloping ridge that mars
The distant view ; the village gliding by,
All form a picture, restful, sweet, within the cars.

The quiet towns, the fields that lie between,
The gentle gliding motion never wars,
The mind is filled with vague and dreamy thoughts,
At peace with all the world while in the cars.

HELEN.

WHENE'ER I see the picture of thy face,
And think upon thy charms and infant grace,
I long to clasp thee to my heart, my dear,
Thy silvery laughter once again to hear.

Ah, Helen, with thy winning loveliness,
A key to all hearts thou must ay possess,
The pleasure of those happy hours with thee,
Will live long years within my memory.

TWO HOMES.

THE cares of the day are over,
And I sit alone to-night,
Pondering over bygone days,
When faith and hope were bright.

Backward, ay, ever backward,
My thoughts will farther roam,
As I lift my eyes to the picture,
Of my dear, old childhood home.

Oh sweet and restful vision.
You bring to me again
The voices long since silent,
And still the heart's deep pain.

I do not seem alone, now,
For faces everywhere
Are smiling kindly on me,
And drive away all care.

And one not long departed,
Comes nearer than the rest;
I hush my breath to hear again
The voice I loved the best.

“My darling child, be comforted,”
He says in accents sweet;
“Your mission here is not yet done,
Your work not yet complete.”

“Look forward, never backward,
Look upward to the light
That streams upon your pathway,
And scatters all your night.”

“Your future home is dearer
Than that you gaze upon,
The time is far less distant,
Than those days long since gone.”

“Live for the golden future,
Shun thoughts that bring you pain,
And know that every loss on earth
Brings closer Heaven's gain.”

Silence succeeds, the faces fade,
Yet from the emptiness,
My spirit reaches up to him
And finds its happiness.

LIFE.

WATCHING, waiting, fearing, hoping,
We press onward, blindly groping,
Up toward where the great heights stand,
Friends oft lend a helping hand.

Longing, with the soul uplifting,
Struggles fierce, with Fortune shifting,
Still our eyes upon the height
We hope to gain, with our dim light.

Oft the way is dark and dreary,
Steep and rough, the heart grows weary.
Slipping backward, leaping forward,
Pushing ever upward, onward.

We gain a point—the goal is clearer,
Each step we take will bring us nearer,
'Though shadows flit across our path, the sun
But shines more golden for the new place won.

Thus runs man's life, his struggles, aims, ambition,
Possession holds, from birth to his transition;
His higher home! This life could not attain
Unto that glory, and eternal gain.

LOOKING BACKWARD.

WE come to this life for a purpose,
Not one soul but serves God's will,
'Though our way may seem dark and uncertain
And our path lies all up hill.

Yet when we reach the summit
Where the sun shines clear and strong,
We shall look with wonder backward
That it seemed so dark and long.

For here and there 'midst the shadows,
The gleams of golden light
Shone warmly down on the winding path,
And above the sky was bright.

The hill was steep and the climbing hard,
Yet here and there by the way,
Were places of rest and refreshment,
And new strength came each day.

We shall look in vain for the tempests
That seemed here to rend the soul,
And tear the heart asunder
In its wild and fierce control.

For then, with a perfect vision,
We shall see the strengthening arm,
That kept us from fainting or falling,
And soothed all our grief and alarm.

Oh, why do I doubt or grow hardened,
Or allow the dark shadows of night
To blot out the stray bits of sunshine
That come, now and then, to my sight.

For I know that in none of my pathway
Do I climb life's hill alone;
And the cross must be borne with more meekness,
More patience and faith must be shown.

Else my sorrow and vain repentance
Will dim all the brightness of Heaven;
That to others will come with rapture,
As our lives read, the reward is given.



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